

Application No. 10/046,886  
Amendment dated May 4, 2004  
Reply to Office Action of November 10, 2003

**REMARKS**

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested. Claims 1, 4, 7-8, 11, 16, and 23-25 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, claims 2, 5-6, 9-10, 12, 15, 17, 19-20, and 26 have been amended, so that claims 2, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 12-15, 17-22, and 26 are presently pending. Claims 5, 12, 15, and 26 are independent.

In the Advisory Action mailed February 23, 2004, the Examiner indicated that Applicant's responsive amendment of January 27, 2004, failed to place the application in condition for allowance and, therefore, the amendment would not be entered. However, the Examiner reiterated that claims 5, 12-15, and 26 were objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

In the Advisory Action mailed April 20, 2004, the Examiner indicated that Applicant's amendment of March 31, 2004, failed to place the application in condition for allowance and, therefore, the amendment would not be entered. In particular, the Examiner pointed out that Applicant rewrote rejected claim 25 in independent form rather than rewriting allowable claim 26 in independent form.

In the present amendment, Applicant has rewritten allowable claims 5, 12, 15, and 26 in independent form. The remaining claims have either been canceled or now depend from allowable independent claims 5, 12, 15, and 26. Therefore, the present amendment simply amends the claims in a manner which the Examiner has indicated would place the application in condition for allowance.

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A 3-month Petition for Extension of Time accompanies this Amendment, along with a check in the amount of \$265.00 for the additional petition fee set forth in 37 C.F.R. § 1.17(a)(3). A check in the amount of \$43.00 also accompanies this Amendment for the one additional independent claim.

Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. Should the Examiner have any questions, please contact the undersigned at (800) 445-3460.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-0522.

Respectfully submitted,

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(Dkt No. 31936)